"those enduring matinee idols"

A CHRONOLOGICAL LOOK
AT SOUND SERIALS
(1929 - 1956)

CHAPTER 22
APRIL - MAY, 1973
VOLUME 3 - NUMBER 2

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Lorna Gray
as "Vultura" in
PERILS OF NYOKA
(See story on page 322.)

MASTHEAD: Robert Armstrong and Ken Maynard
— See article on page 327.

Written for TEMI by BOB MALCOMSON
with Photo Assistance from Jim Stringham,
Angel Gutierrez and C.M. Parkhurst.

BACKGROUND

ADVENTURES OF RED RYDER was released by Republic Pictures on June 28, 1940. The serial had excellent production values, and was loaded with action. But it suffered in one department: the story line. Everything that had already been done in Westerns, and done several thousand times, was offered to bridge the action sequences.

Red Ryder was initially introduced as a comic strip hero in 1938, drawn by Fred Harman and created by Stephen Slesinger. However, the film credits gave accreditation as "Based upon the famous NEA newspaper ***feature.***" Yet all of Republic's advertising said: "Based upon the famous NEA newspaper ***cartoon.***"

Many of the characters in the "newspaper feature" were carried over to the serial: Red, of course, The Duchess, Ace Hanlon, One Eye Chapin, Cherokee, and Little Beaver. Three of them were killed-off in the serial, yet they managed to carry on in Mr. Harman's pen-drawings.

CHAPTER TITLES

1. Murder on the Santa Fe Trail
2. Horsemen of Death
3. Trail's End
4. Water Rustlers
5. Avalanche
6. Hangman's Noose
7. Framed
8. Blazing Walls
9. Records of Doom
10. One Second to Live
11. The Devil's Marksman
12. Frontier Justice

Directed by William Witney and John English

FOREWORD

Two flags move together: the stars and bars of Confederacy and stars and stripes of Union. Then the date 1870 is superimposed. This dissolves to a roll-up foreword:

"America's first great problem after the Civil War was the construction of a railroad to link our bordering oceans.

"Selfish interests, seeking to control the right-of-way, fought the work savagely — but the spirit of progress prevailed and the United States were bound together with highways of steel.

"But before the last spike was driven the Frontier flamed with the bitterest strife in its history."

THE STORY

Calvin Drake (Harry Worth) is determined to obtain title to land planned for a railroad (the Western Pacific) link from Ten Sleep Junction to Needles. Between these two points is the town of Mesquite, Arizona, where most of the story takes place. In Drake's employ is Ace Hanlon (Noah Beery).

Hanlon orders his henchman One Eye Chapin (Bob Kortman) to "take the boys down" and convince the ranchers to "sell out at the right price."

During a confrontation, one of the ranchers, Ira Withers (Ed Cassidy) and his son, Dan (William Benedict), are murdered. A second son, Sammy, is saved when Red Ryder appears on his horse, Thunder. Shortly after, the already introduced Indian boy, Little Beaver, returns to the scene.

Red Ryder, Sammy and Little Beaver.

Red takes Sammy to the Circle R ranch, home of his father, Colonel Tom Ryder (William Farnum). The boy is put in the care of The Duchess (Maude Pierce Allen).

The two Ryders go the the Mesquite Cattlemen's Bank, whose president is Calvin Drake. They tell Drake of their plan to organize the cattlemen to chase the gunfighters out of the territory: "Men like Ace Hanlon, for instance." Drake promises his heartiest support!

After Colonel Ryder departs for the jail to swear out a murder warrant for One Eye, and Red heads for the local newspaper to have them print up a herald announcing a meeting of the cattlemen, Drake enters a secret passageway thru the bank vault that leads to an office in Ace Hanlon's saloon. He warns Hanlon that Colonel Ryder must be stopped from obtaining the warrant.

At the jail, both Colonel Ryder and Sheriff Luke Andrews (Lloyd Ingraham) are gunned down. The killings are witnessed by Andrews' daughter, Beth (Vivian Coe), who was in a storeroom.

Beth identifies the assassins to Red: Shark (Ray Teal), Lon Walker (Charles Robert Thomas) and the Apache Kid (Joe Delacruz). He seeks them out at Hanlon's saloon. In a gun duel, Walker and Kid are killed. Shark is taken a prisoner.

Shark, Sheriff Dade and Ace Hanlon.

The new sheriff, Dade (Carleton Young), in league with Hanlon, permits Shark to escape jail. Dade is tied up to make his story of having been overpowered more plausible.

Shark kidnaps Beth and takes her out of town in a stagecoach. Red is soon in pursuit. He boards the moving coach and engages the driver in a fight. The driver falls to the ground. Ryder jumps down onto the wagon tongue and hangs on, then lets go, the vehicle passing over him. He grabs the axle on the rear of the coach and pulls himself up. Shark opens the coach door and the two commence fighting.

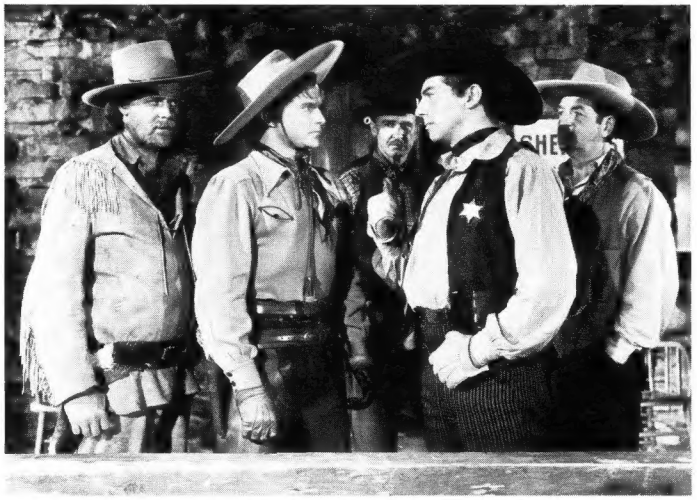
(Poster art below is 50% misleading.)

The horses come loose! Chapter one ends with the coach rolling to the edge of a broken bridge projecting out over a chasm and plummets down. In Chapter two, the coach is seen to have toppled into a lake below. Red saves Beth from a watery grave. Shark attempts to escape, but is roped by Red and taken to the Circle R.

Ryder has Cherokee Sims (Hal Taliaferro) go to Mesquite and tell Sheriff Dade he will be bringing in Shark that afternoon.

Driving a buckboard, pulled by two horses, Red heads for town. In the back is a dummy, supposedly Shark, bound and partially covered.

Red is attacked by One Eye and his men. He jumps from the wagon to the horses, then pulls the kingpin loose separating them. One Eye and the other "heavies" ride to the wagon. Red mounts one of the horses and races for Mesquite.



Foreground: Cherokee, Red Ryder and Sheriff Dade.

Just when Cherokee is inquiring of the whereabouts of Shark, Little Beaver appears with a hay wagon. Red pulls the straw aside revealing Shark, bound and gagged.

Shark is killed by a man named Bates before he can reveal the identity of his boss. Red rides in pursuit of Bates, bulldogging him from his horse. They both are lying stunned on the ground when Cherokee, Dade and deputies gallop on the scene. They do not see Red and apparently trample him. End of episode two.

Ryder becomes conscious and calls out to Cherokee. Cherokee grabs hold of Red, pulling him up on the saddle behind him.

The members of the Cattlemen's Association plan to pool their money from the last round-up and make loans to the ranchers who have been burned out. Drake tells Hanlon that's a break for them. Since it's the last ready cash most of the ranchers have, he plans to have the stagecoach (bringing the money from the stockyards) held up.

Red suggests a guard be put on the stage. Drake says he'll ask Sheriff Dade himself. Red: "Thanks, Drake." Drake: "Don't mention it."

Two of Hanlon's men overtake the stagecoach in which only a driver and Dade are aboard. Dade claims his gun is jammed, and tells the driver to pull up.

But Ryder and Cherokee appear and foil the robbery, thus saving the money pouch and its contents.

At Mesquite, the driver turns the pouch over to Drake. Suddenly two horsemen ride down the street, guns blazing; two other henchmen appear from around the corner of the bank. Drake is hit over the head. One of the "heavies" grabs the bag of money and hands it to a rider.

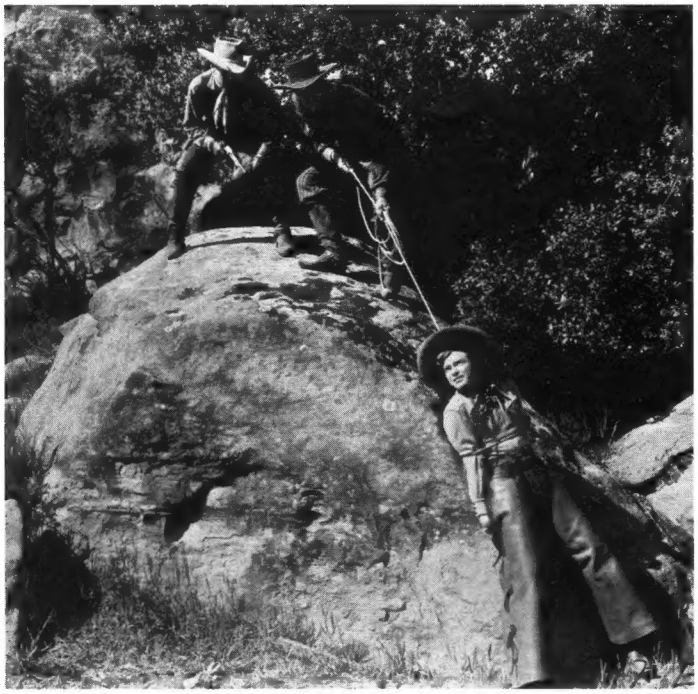
Standing center: Beth and Drake.

With Little Beaver's help, Red learns that the money has been taken to an old mine. There Red is almost crushed by a runaway ore car.

Later, the Duchess secures from Drake a 30 day mortgage on the Circle R for a large sum of money. The money is to be used to help the ranchers until they have a new herd ready for market.

Drake tells Hanlon that this new development is "a piece of real luck." All they have to do is stop the ranchers from getting their cattle ready in time for shipment. The plan is to dynamite the cattle watering hole, and burn the water storage tank. This is done at the Circle R ranch with devastating results. However, complete disaster is prevented when the cattle herd is moved to the Wilson ranch, which has water.

Red is waylaid in Chapter six and taken to a shack in Dark Canyon. But not for long.



He quickly (thanks to some diversionary help from Little Beaver) subdues his captors: One Eye, Slim (Al Taylor) and Breed (Augie Gomez).

Sheriff Dade is killed by Red in Chapter eight and replaced by Deputy Sheriff Lawson.

In Chapter eleven, the elusive desperado One Eye is seen by Cherokee riding out of town. "Are you sure?" asks Red. "Of course I'm sure. You can't mistake what he uses for a face."

Cherokee is killed by One Eye while rescuing the Federal Land Commissioner, Treadway (Hooper Atchley). In turn, One Eye is shot by Ryder.

Red captures Hanlon and from a letter in his possession learns that Calvin Drake is "the top head in this business."

At Drake's office, the banker is confronted by Red and Treadway. Hanlon, who has escaped, enters with gun in hand. He and Drake force the Commissioner to sign an affidavit certifying that the title to certain stolen land is legal.

Red and Treadway are taken through the secret passageway connecting the bank with Hanlon's office. In the office are three "heavies": Bart (Ken Terrell), Joe (Roy Brent) and Slade (Reed Howes).

Hanlon orders them to take the prisoners below. Once in the cellar, a fight ensues. During the melee, Treadway escapes and goes to Sheriff Lawson for help.

Drake plans to flee without Hanlon. He tells Hanlon: "It isn't a double cross. It's what you've earned . . . I don't like bunglers." Then he proceeds to shoot him.

On horseback, Drake takes off. Red emerges from the cellar. The Indian boy tells him: "Little Beaver see man who work with money go that way."

Ryder picks up Drake's trail, then engages him in a long fight. Both go toppling down a steep cliff. Red survives; Drake does not. THE END.

A recent photo of Don "Red" Barry holding a copy of TEMI, opened to an interview with him that appeared on page 63. Our thanks to Richard Harrison, a professional photographer, located in Los Angeles, for sending it along to share with TEMI readers.

MEN OF ACTION

By DON DAYNARD and WALLY SEELEY

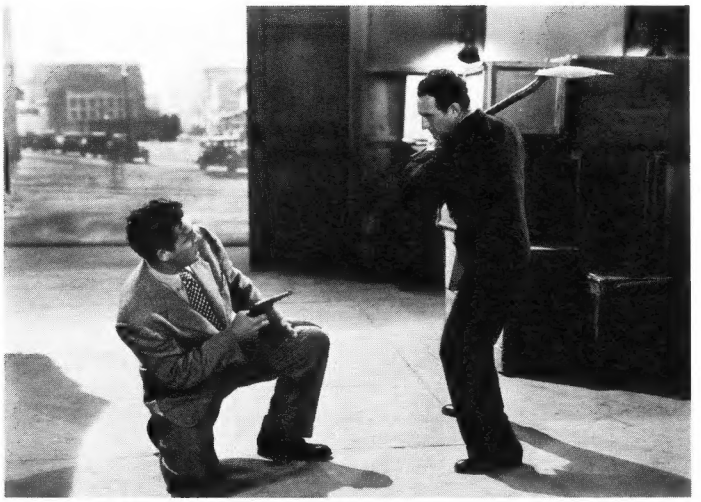
Among the top ten stuntmen Hollywood has produced, ***KEN TERRELL*** is probably the least recognized by the movie-goer. Terrell was a very capable, versatile and extremely brawny stunter especially admired by his contemporaries for his aptitude toward "high work". At all times Terrell was proficient in his uncanny observance of camera angles, making identification by other than action buffs nearly impossible.

Ken Terrell was born April 29, 1907, in Coolidge, Georgia. At the age of fourteen he and his family moved to Atlanta and Ken entered Georgia Tech. His involvement in sports at the University led him toward building a better physique. As a boy Terrell could have modelled for the 90-pound weakling of the Charles Atlas ad. He had always a flair for performing and as his body developed through sports activities, he decided upon a showbusiness career in Vaudeville.

Ken Terrell in SPY SMASHER (Republic, 1942).

In the mid-twenties, showbiz was Vaudeville and Vaudeville was New York. With his sights set upon a "next to closing" act, he left Georgia Tech and proceeded to ready himself for "The Great White Way". Ken was a natural gymnast and he worked hard perfecting his ability so in 1926 he went to New York, Vaudeville and, he hoped, success. It didn't quite work out that way. The doors of the booking agents were closed to an untried entity and Ken eked out a living in a 5th Avenue Department store window, demonstrating the products of local sporting goods manufacturers. From there he took a modelling job for an art school, and finally, after departing New York for Chicago, secured a booking on the Keith Circuit.

Terrell and Dick Purcell in CAPTAIN AMERICA (Rep. '43).

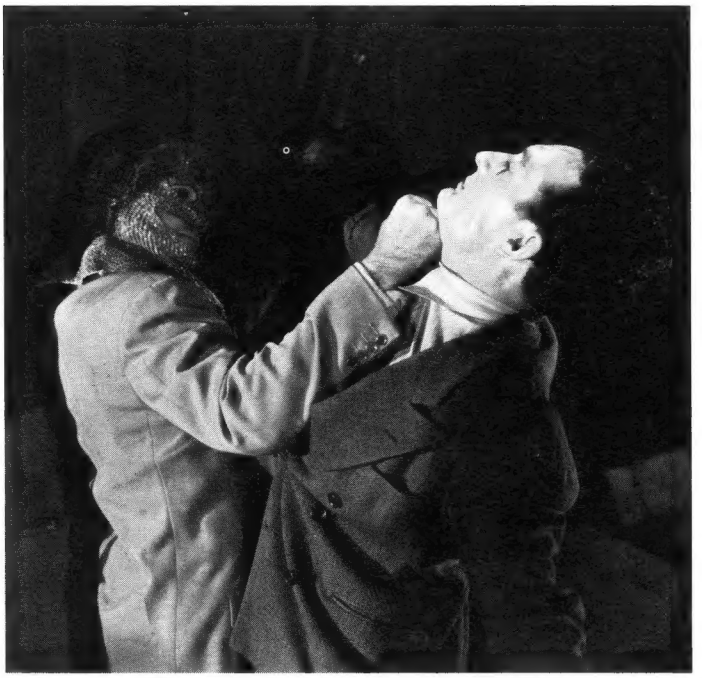


Charles Quigley and Terrell in THE CRIMSON GHOST (Rep. '46). (Note old cars on rear projection screen.)

Ken had various acts with a number of partners over the next four years, but his most rewarding arrangement was with the diminutive Jimmy Fawcett. As the bookings became fewer and fewer, however, Terrell and Fawcett decided to try their hand at motion pictures. After arriving in Hollywood in mid 1937, they visited Loren Riebe, an old vaudeville friend.

Riebe greeted them by jokingly saying: "Well, here are my Little Cousins". He advised them to avoid stunting assignments as they would become typed as stuntmen and this could seriously interfere with their acting aspirations. They heeded his advice, until virtually out of work, they did begin accepting stuntwork. Ken's first serial stunt was a swing out from an 80-foot high gas tank on a chain hanging from the arm of a derrick in Republic's DAREDEVILS OF THE RED CIRCLE (TEMI, page 234).

As stuntwork became more frequent, in many instances with the same group of stuntmen sharing the assignments, the Riebe salutation "Little Cousins" became a familiar greeting to the other younger stuntmen as



David Sharpe and Terrell in MYSTERIOUS DR. SATAN (Rep. '41).

they met on the set. The term stuck and extended to become the name of an informal group of stuntmen who were socially and professionally compatable, and who were to become the mainstay of the Republic serials of the late thirties and forties. The group numbered twelve: Riebe, Fawcett, George Suzanne, Louis Tomei, Bud Wolfe, Eddy Parker, David Sharpe, Carey Loftin, Dale Van Sickel, Tom Steele, Duke Taylor and Ken. (Fawcett was killed in a car-motorcycle accident in 1942.) Other stuntmen who became part of the group, eventually, included Duke Green and Fred Graham.

According to Ken's personal files he appeared in and completed 1,354 stunts! These included hand-to-hand fights, knife and sword fights, jui jitsu; automobile chases, skids, crashes and blind drives plus leaps from and transfers to moving cars and trucks; water work such as high dives, long swims, falls into water from heights: high falls off walls, cliffs, balconies, out windows, off moving cars, trucks, trains, on ladders, down staircases and into trapdoors; also bulldogs and reactions to explosions.

Then, after many successful years, in early 1958 Ken broke his leg during a rehearsal for a Chevrolet commercial and never fully recovered from the injury to sufficiently enable his return to full-time stunting. In 1959, he started stunt rehearsals on "Spartacus" but, due to his leg injury, was forced to withdraw after only one day's work. During the period 1961-1964 he tried his hand at straight acting with no rough stuff but the few TV and feature roles he obtained were just not enough. He was constantly met with the statement: "You're not an actor, you're a stuntman". During his life Ken held an unswerving confidence in his ability. During the serials and features of the '40's his accomplishments served to satisfy his need for assurance. The '50's were a disappointment to Ken. He tried his hand at writing but nobody bought. His attempts at straight acting were satisfactory but led to nothing.

His health began to fail. His wife left him. His cronies of the '40's were no longer there.

He was no longer capable of the spectacular work he had become known for. He was forgotton by all but one or two friends and he died, alone, on March 8, 1966.

During his career Ken Terrell appeared in 61* serials. The information here is from Terrell's own files. Name of producer follows title: (R) Republic, (U) Universal and (C) Columbia.

1939 DAREDEVILS OF THE RED CIRCLE (R) - Stunt heavy.
DICK TRACY'S G-MEN (R) - "Ed".
ZORRO'S FIGHTING LEGION (R) - Indian heavy, doubled John Merton, bit parts.

1940 DRUMS OF FU MANCHU (R) - Dacoit in museum sequence.
ADVENTURES OF RED RYDER (R) - "Bart".
KING OF THE ROYAL MOUNTED (R) - Heavy.
MYSTERIOUS DR. SATAN (R) - "Corwin".
THE GREEN HORNET STRIKES AGAIN (U) - Double, stunts.
JUNIOR G-MEN (U) - Double, stunts.
WINNERS OF THE WEST (U) - Double, stunts.

1941 SKY RAIDERS (U) - Doubled John Holland and car work.
ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN MARVEL (R) - Doubled Kenne Duncan, Al Taylor and Stanley Price, plus fights and bit as the butler "Hawks".
JUNGLE GIRL (R) - "Mananga" and doubled Trevor Bardette.
KING OF THE TEXAS RANGERS (R) - Doubled Duncan Renaldo, Kenne Duncan and Jack Ingram, plus heavy bits.
DICK TRACY vs. CRIME, INC. (R) - Stunts.

1942 SPY SMASHER (R) - Doubled Crane Whitley, police bit, and stunts.
GANG BUSTERS (U) - Doubled George J. Lewis.
JUNIOR G-MEN OF THE AIR (U) - Doubled Gabriel Dell and Billy Halop.
PERILS OF NYOKA (R) - "Ahmed" and stunts.
*KING OF THE MOUNTIES (R) - Not listed in Terrell's files and obtained from another source.

1943 THE ADVENTURES OF SMILIN' JACK (U) - Doubled Tom Brown, Philip Ahn and Japanese soldier bit.
G-MEN vs. THE BLACK DRAGON (R) - "Galt" and fights.
DAREDEVILS OF THE WEST (R) - Bartender and stunts.
ADVENTURES OF THE FLYING CADETS (U) - Doubled Johnny Downs.
SECRET SERVICE IN DARKEST AFRICA (R) - Doubled Duncan Renaldo plus 6 bits and fights.
THE MASKED MARVEL (R) - Heavy.
CAPTAIN AMERICA (R) - Doubled George J. Lewis, part of "Hunt" and fights.

1944 THE TIGER WOMAN (R) - Doubled Duncan Renaldo and part of native.
THE GREAT ALASKAN MYSTERY (U) - Doubled Martin Kosleck.
HAUNTED HARBOR (R) - Doubled Kenne Duncan and stunts.
RAIDERS OF GHOST CITY (U) - Doubled George J. Lewis.
MYSTERY OF THE RIVER BOAT (U) - Doubled Anthony Warde.
ZORRO'S BLACK WHIP (R) - Bits and fights.

1945 JUNGLE QUEEN (U) - Doubled John Merton.
THE MASTER KEY (U) - Stunts.
FEDERAL OPERATOR 99 (R) - Fight routine.
SECRET AGENT X-9 (U) - Doubled John Roy, German sailor and fall.
THE PURPLE MONSTER STRIKES (R) - "Andy" and fights.

1946 KING OF THE FOREST RANGERS (R) - Heavy and fights.
DAUGHTER OF DON Q (R) - Professor and fight.
LOST CITY OF THE JUNGLE (U) - Doubled John Galludet, car roll and Chinese in boat.
THE CRIMSON GHOST (R) - Heavy and fights.
THE MYSTERIOUS MR. M (U) - Doubled Douglas Carter.

1947 SON OF ZORRO (R) - Doubled Stanley Price and part of "Thomas".
JACK ARMSTRONG (C) - Native.
JESSE JAMES RIDES AGAIN (R) - Stunts and fights.
THE BLACK WIDOW (R) - "Dr. Mendoza" and doubled Anthony Warde.

1948 G-MEN NEVER FORGET (R) - "Kelsey" and heavy fights.
DANGERS OF THE CANADIAN MOUNTED (R) - Doubled Anthony Warde and heavy.
ADVENTURES OF FRANK AND JESSE JAMES (R) - Heavy fights.

1949 FEDERAL AGENTS vs. UNDERWORLD, INC. (R) - Stunts.
GHOST OF ZORRO (R) - Fight heavy.
KING OF THE ROCKET MEN (R) - Doubled Stanley Price.

1950 JAMES BROTHERS OF MISSOURI (R) - Bit and fight.
RADAR PATROL vs. SPY KING (R) - Mechanic and fight.
THE INVISIBLE MONSTER (R) - Heavy and fights.
DESPERADOES OF THE WEST (R) - Doubled I. Stanford Jolley.

1951 FLYING DISC MAN FROM MARS (R) - Bit.

1952 RADAR MEN FROM THE MOON (R) - Rocket man take offs, leaps and landings.

1954 TRADER TOM OF THE CHINA SEAS (R) - Officer in fight.

1956 PERILS OF THE WILDERNESS (C) - "Frenchy" and fights.

Terrell and Tom Steele in THE MASKED MARVEL (Rep. '43).

Story and Pictures by Jim Stringham

BACKGROUND

The likeness (above) of THE SHADOW appeared on magazine and comic book covers in every newsstand in the country. The costume was faithfully copied, and Victor Jory was perfectly cast as the mysterious crime fighter. He projected the menacing qualities of the radio and pulp character, and, as above, showed the brooding eyes of the man "who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men."

Columbia Pictures took THE SHADOW, according to the ads, "Right out of the air waves and magazine stories." The credits specified "Based upon stories published in 'The Shadow' magazine." What appeared was a curious mixture of characters and elements from magazine and radio which resembled Columbia's earlier THE SPIDER'S WEB (TEMI, pages 211-213 and 228-230) more than either.

"The Shadow, mysterious character who aids the forces of law and order, is in reality Lamont Cranston, wealthy young man about town. As The Shadow, Cranston is gifted with hypnotic power to cloud men's minds so that they cannot see him." In the serial, Cranston remained the true identity of The Shadow, although this was only an occasional disguise of the pulp character. The hypnotic invisibility of radio was ignored, as was the almost invisible "Living Shadow" of the pulps. Cranston was a "scientist and criminologist" here, aided by "secretary Margot Lane." Margot was a radio character not picked up by the magazine until 1941. Commissioner Weston and Inspector Cardona had appeared in both series, and (Harry) Vincent of the pulps was used as Cranston's driver and general assistant. The magazine Shadow used countless disguises, but the serial (released in 1940) limited him to just one: Lin Chang, an underworld character.

CHAPTER TITLES

1. The Doomed City
2. The Shadow Attacks
3. The Shadow's Peril
4. In The Tiger's Lair
5. Danger Above
6. The Shadow's Trap
7. Where Horror Waits
8. The Shadow Rides the Rails
9. The Devil in White
10. The Underground Trap
11. Chinatown Night
12. Murder by Remote Control
13. Wheels of Death
14. The Sealed Room
15. The Shadow's Net Closes

Interestingly, the following story appeared in the newspaper 'Variety' on September 6, 1939:

> LONG SHADOW
>
> Hollywood, Sept. 5
>
> Columbia's 15-chapter cliffhanger, 'The Shadow,' rolled today (Tues.) with D. Ross Lederman and Norman Deming directing jointly.
>
> Victor Jory and Lorna Gray are toplined.

The errors are multiple. Lederman and Deming did not direct. James W. Horne did. And the leading lady was not Gray, but Veda Ann Borg.

"The Black Tiger" was the rather silly name adopted by an unknown master criminal who, like "The Octopus" of THE SPIDER'S WEB, sought to gain control of key industries through a reign of terror against them and their owners.

* * *

After the Tiger's threat was established through several murderous attacks, a citizens' committee — often meeting at the Cobalt Club of the novel — was formed to combat the menace. This brought together Cranston, Margot (Veda Ann Borg), Weston (Frank LaRue), Cardona (Edward Peil, Sr.), and a number of industrialists and inventors. The chief function of the committee, however, seemed to be to introduce new victims to The Black Tiger. Members announced new inventions or activities to the group, and the Tiger, invariably, immediately attacked them. In particular, an explosive stolen from committee member Stanford Marshall (J. Paul Jones) in the first episode would menace The Shadow throughout the serial.

Cranston was able to keep track of Tiger operations through his third identity as Lin Chang, the equivalent of Blinky McQuade in THE SPIDER'S WEB. Vincent (Roger Moore) seemed a combination of Ram Singh and Jackson from the earlier serial. Also appearing were Robert Fiske, Jack Ingram, Charles Hamilton, Dick Botiller, Charles King, Kit Guard, Griff Barnett, and Lew Sargent.

Cranston and Margot. A gimmick used repeatedly was a dictaphone/transmitter planted in a Black Tiger headquarters to enable them to listen in on some new plot. (1)

The voice of The Tiger: Unseen, The Black Tiger broadcasts orders to his men. Although The Shadow repeatedly penetrates their lairs, he finds only these special radios broadcasting the commands of the master criminal. (2)

The Shadow's costume was obviously a stuntman's nightmare. Also, it could not always be immediately available when Cranston changed identity . . . (3)

. . . so an easily concealed mask was introduced as an alternate disguise. Here, The Shadow attacks Charlie King and Lew Sargent. (4)

Lin Chang — proprietor of the Oriental Bazaar and underworld character — has insinuated himself into the confidence of the Tiger gang. He is really Lamont Cranston, The Shadow. (5)

Development of the television industry would be delayed by World War II, but, in 1940, it was a logical target. The Shadow battles Tiger henchmen who have placed explosive nitrogen bulbs in the equipment. When it warms up . . .

THE END

HERE'S TO THE LADIES

by LEONARD MALTIN
PART I • LORNA GRAY

In the heyday of Hollywood's studio system, the 1930's and '40's, there was a very definite caste system. Actors, writers, directors, and others who worked in B movies, had a difficult time scaling the ladder to more prestigious assignments. Some studios, like MGM, used their B-units as a training ground for talent, and ***intended*** to move worthy novices into their A-films. Many others, however, seemed to pre-ordain a person's status once they became established in Bs, and they never got the chance to show their stuff in bigger, classier movies. Naturally, there were exceptions to the rule, but before too long, there developed a large community of working-actors and technicians who revolved in their own sphere of "lesser" films. These efforts encompassed B-movies, serials, and short subjects.

Most interesting of all is the use of leading ladies, who seemed to make the rounds from serials to shorts and programmers in a constant circle. Some of them became so proficient that they enjoyed long and healthy careers in this field; others were not really capable of doing anything more challenging than standing around and looking pretty, which was all that was required of many such heroines.

Browsing through serial checklists, one sees many names of women who turned up frequently in two-reel comedies, among tham Jacqueline Wells, Lucille Lund, Lorna Gray, Ann Doran, Carol Hughes, Louise Currie, Dorothy Christy, Muriel Evans, Mary Ainslee, Constance Bergen, Dorothy Short, Dorothy Sebastian, Shirley Patterson, Dorothy Granger, Marion Shilling, Charlotte Henry, and Phyllis Coates.

We would like to take a look at some of the more interesting of these actresses, and compare notes on their comedic efforts and their more stoic work in serials. Since information on most of them is sketchy at best, this series will rely more on photos than text — which may turn out to be more intriguing than any page of information.

* * *

LORNA GRAY was born Virginia Mae Pound in Grand Rapids, Michigan, on July 26, 1921. Apparently her first ambition was to be a singer, and she worked as a band vocalist for a while before making her film debut in a Columbia B of late 1938, "Adventure in Sahara," starring Paul Kelly. If it sounds outlandish that a 17-year-old girl could become a leading lady, even in a Columbia quickie, one must remember that the trend in the 1930's was toward maturity, and teenaged girls always tried to make themselves look older — a style that has completely reversed itself in recent years.

Sammy McKim and Lorna Gray in
FLYING G-MEN (Columbia, 1939).

Miss Gray was given a Columbia contract, and was kept busy over the next few years in Westerns, programmers, and two-reelers, along with a handful of other prolific studio players. It's particularly amusing to note that the cast of "The Man They Could Not Hang" (1939) was largely duplicated in a Three Stooges short made at the same time, "Three Sappy People," with Lorna Gray switching from the sedate daughter of madman Boris Karloff in the feature to the madcap bride of Don Beddoe (who played a detective in the feature) in the Stooges short, who gets a face full of whipped cream in a dinner-table melee. Also doing double duty were Ann Doran, the girlfriend of Karloff's victim in the feature film, and a haughty Countess in the comedy. Dick Curtis, James Craig, and John Tyrrell, all in the cast of "The Man They Could Not Hang," also popped up frequently in the studio's two-reelers.

The Three Stooges, Gray and Ann Doran in
"Three Sappy People" (Columbia, 1939).

Another 1939 feature, "The Stranger from Texas," co-starred Miss Gray with Charles Starrett; featured in the cast was Richard Fiske. Lorna and Fiske were co-featured the same year in a Buster Keaton comedy short, "The Pest from the West," with the leading lady as a fiery Latin senorita in love with Fiske (Ferdinand the Bullfighter) who tries to convince her jealous employer (Gino Corrado) that she really loves gringo Keaton, so that he and Keaton will kill each other and leave the two lovebirds free. The actress' bogus accent was perfectly in keeping with the farcical nature of the short, one of Keaton's best for Columbia.

Gino Corrado, Gray and Buster Keaton in
"The Pest From the West" (Columbia, 1939).

Between other B-picture assignments, and other shorts like the Three Stooges' "Rockin' Through the Rockies," which featured another young actress named Linda Winters, who changed her name to Dorothy Comingore and played Susan Alexander in "Citizen Kane," Miss Gray took a job as vocalist with a band fronted by Roger Pryor, her co-star in "The Man They Could Not Hang". These contract people stuck together! That same year she made her first of six serials — leading lady in Columbia's FLYING G-MEN (see TEMI, page 242).

Don Douglas and Gray in
DEADWOOD DICK (Columbia, 1940).

Finally, in late 1940, the actress left Columbia to freelance at other B-studios. In 1942 she obtained the role for which she is best remembered, at Republic, the studio that kept her busy for the rest of the decade. As Vultura in PERILS OF NYOKA, Miss Gray abandoned her status as leading lady to turn in a good job as an arch-villainess, grappling with heroine Kay Aldridge, and making her mark on serial fans.

Miss Gray alternated between good-girl and bad-girl roles in three more serials spread over 1944-46. She continued to freelance, winning a small role in Paramount's "So Proudly We Hail," starring Claudette Colbert, and the title part in Republic's "The Girl Who Dared," a murder mystery involving twin sisters.

In 1945, Lorna Gray disappeared and re-emerged as ***Adrian Booth***, first using that name in a Republic production, "Tell It to a Star." Interestingly, her (then) new official biography changed her birthdate from 1921 to 1924, and obliterated any mention of work prior to 1944 when she was put under contract to Republic.

From that time on, she was kept busy in a steady string of the studio's Westerns and programmers with Monte Hale, Bill Elliott, Rod Cameron, Robert Livingston, and others. In 1949 she was co-starred with Lloyd Bridges in "Hideout," a Western melodrama. Averaging from three to five features a year, Adrian Booth made her last appearance at Republic in

Dick Purcell and Gray in
CAPTAIN AMERICA (Republic, 1943).

Gray, Dale Van Sickel, Tom London, actor in
FEDERAL OPERATOR 99 (Republic, 1945).

1951, when presumably her seven-year contract expired and was not renewed. She went to Monogram for one feature, "Yellow Fin," starring Wayne Morris, and then vanished from the movie scene.

Lorna Gray/Adrian Booth was not a great actress, but she had a pleasing personality and, clearly, a sense of humor. What has happened to her, this writer does not know, but it can be said that she provided some memorable moments to fans of serials, Westerns, and comedies alike.

POSTSCRIPT

Frequent contributor to TEMI, C. M. Parkhurst, was recently a guest in the home of Lorna Gray (Adrian Booth). He found her still strikingly beautiful and as interested in her fans as they are in her. Married to actor David Brian, they live in Sherman Oaks, a fashionable suburb of Los Angeles. For many years Mrs. Brian has been deeply involved in Church work and was one of the founders of WAIF, an international child welfare program. She is currently working on a book of a spiritual nature.

Kirk Alyn, Roy Barcroft and Adrian Booth in
DAUGHTER OF DON Q (Republic, 1946).

EDITOR'S NOTE

Len Maltin is editor/publisher of "Film Fan Monthly" magazine and, among other projects, is widely recognized as a practicing historian on the subject of "The Great Movie Shorts — those wonderful one and two-reelers of the Thirties and Forties." In fact, that's the full title of a book he has written. Hardbound, 8½" x 11" in size, 236 pages, and indexed.

Mr. Maltin certainly does his homework. His book brings back to life, in totality, the "Our Gang," "Edgar Kennedy," "Laurel and Hardy," "Three Stooges," "John Nesbitt's Passing Parade," "Pete Smith Specialities," "Leon Errol," and Charlie Chase" series (to name only a few). No animated cartoons. No serials. But ***all*** of the other "filler" short subjects that made theatre attendance such a pleasure back in the '30's and '40's are given wonderful attention.

If interested in purchasing (as TEMI did) a copy of "The Great Movie Shorts," write Leonard Maltin, 77 Grayson Place, Teaneck, New Jersey 07666. The price is $8.00. Worth every penny, and a few dollars more.

BELA LUGOSI

The PHANTOM CREEPS

CHAPTER TITLES

1. The Menacing Power
2. Death Stalks the Highways
3. Crashing Towers
4. Invisible Terror
5. Thundering Rails
6. The Iron Monster
7. The Menacing Mist
8. Trapped in the Flames
9. Speeding Doom
10. Phantom Footprints
11. The Blast
12. To Destroy the World

Story and Pictures by JIM STRINGHAM
with an assist from Eric Hoffman, Val Warren
and Urwin Hendrix.

BACKGROUND

Universal Pictures reunited horror veterans Bela Lugosi and Edward Van Sloan — foes in the original (1931) "Dracula" feature — in their 1939 serial fantasy THE PHANTOM CREEPS. Lugosi appeared as Dr. Alex Zorka, a traitorous scientist driven mad by the death of his wife. Van Sloan was Chief Jarvis, head of a spy ring seeking Zorka's inventions. Dr. Fred Mallory (Edwin Stanley), former colleague of Zorka, now opposed him and brought in Department of Military Intelligence agents Capt. Bob West (Robert Kent) and Jim Daly (Regis Toomey).

Zorka had discovered, in a vast crater, a fragment of meteorite containing an unknown element which produced almost unlimited power. (The discovery was stock film from the Karloff-Lugosi thriller "The Invisible Ray", 1936.) Using it, Zorka created weapons and inventions including an eight foot iron robot, a belt device to render its wearer invisible, mechanical spiders which seek out a target disc and release a charge sending anyone bearing the disc into suspended animation, a poison gas, a healing ray capable of removing any wound, and the "Z Ray" projector.

The writers had given him an almost unbeatable arsenal of weapons, and little opposition. West's DMI men (including Roy Barcroft and Eddie Acuff) were little more than comedy relief, and Jarvis' rubbered masked spies were generally ineffective against the scientist. He would certainly have defeated all these enemies in an early chapter except for the actions of his own assistant. Monk (Jack C. Smith), an escaped convict virtually enslaved by Zorka, was treacherous, cowardly, and almost totally incompetent. His deliberate or accidental interference with his master's efforts would repeatedly frustrate Zorka's schemes.

Monk is with the scientist in the basement lab of the Zorka mansion when he hears his wife and Dr. Mallory plan to inform the government of his work. Zorka changes his appearance, then fakes his death in an auto wreck. He activates the great iron robot to move his heavy equipment into secret chambers beneath the mansion.

DMI man Bob West arrives, and Mallory shows him evidence of Zorka's work: an apparently lifeless plant struck by one of the spiders. West flies Mrs. Zorka (Dora Clement) to identify her "husband's" body. Zorka, invisible in the devisualizer belt, plants a disc on her and releases a spider in the plane.

Mrs. Zorka finds the disc and turns it over to the DMI pilot, who is knocked out by the spider. Reporter Jean Drew (Dorothy Arnold) parachutes from the doomed plane but the others are aboard as it crashes to the ground. Zorka, who expects to recover his wife's unconscious body, learns that she is dead. He vows a terrible vengeance upon his enemies.

Jean follows Mallory and the DMI men to the Zorka mansion where Monk, who has stolen the encased fragment, is arrested. Mallory, Jim, and the girl are captured by Jarvis' men, but Bob now has the fragment. Actor Jerry Frank (Jones) is at the right.

Bob arrives at the airfield as the prisoners are about to be flown out of the country. There is a wild fight as the plane takes off, and the landing gear is smashed. Bob saves Jean and Jim, but the spies escape with Mallory and the meteorite box.

Zorka uncovers the source of his power. This lead box contains the meteorite fragment. Only the chemicals they are inhaling protect Zorka and Monk from the deadly fumes it releases.

Bob returns to search the Zorka home, and Zorka sends the robot against him. Other DMI men arrive, forcing Zorka to return the robot to its hidden chamber.

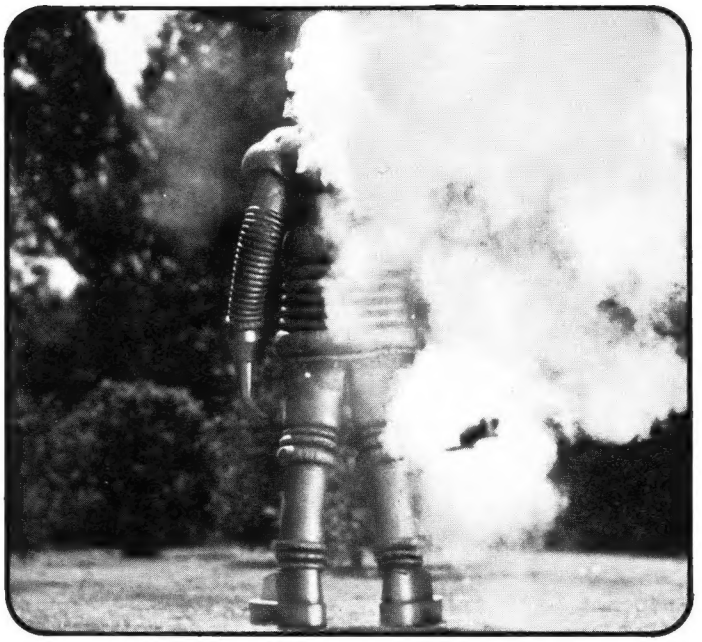
When one of his captors is knocked out by radiation from the meteorite, Mallory radios Bob who leads a raid on Jarvis' lab. Mallory is rescued, but Zorka, invisible, is also present. He is in the car in which Jarvis and an aid flee with the fragment. They see Bob, pursuing, caught in an explosion detonated by a construction crew.

The spies see Bob and Jean drive through the blast, then their car is driven away by the invisible Zorka. They mount an ambush, but, after a few shots, one is down and Bob unmasks the other: "Jarvis! I thought I recognized your hand in this! I've been after you for a long time."

Bob, sure that Zorka is alive and operating from the mansion, moves in with troops and DMI men. Mallory has a device which should neutralize Zorka's devisualizer. They mount a full scale attack on the hidden laboratory.

Zorka and Monk extract the element from the meteorite, sealing it in small tubes. Monk, terrified, is still able to place one of the tubes in the robot. "Now if they do any shooting I'll be rid of you, anyhow!"

Mallory's device works, but Zorka unleashes his entire arsenal! He sends the robot rampaging through the building, releases poison gas, then leads Monk out through a hidden tunnel. The madman cuts down the guards with his Z Ray and escapes with Monk and the deadly tubes.



The huge robot lumbers outside — as a bullet strikes the hidden tube! The thing is obliterated in the resulting blast!

Zorka and Monk steal a plane and the scientist begins using the tubes as super bombs to destroy buildings, ships, etc. Bob is soon after them with military planes, but hesitates to open fire for fear of detonating the rest of the element. Monk begs to surrender, and struggles with Zorka at the controls. The plane goes into a wild dive! Bob and the others see it crash into the ocean and watch the huge but harmless blast that marks the end of Zorka and his weapons of evil. THE END.

POSTSCRIPT

Directors were Ford Beebe and Saul A. Goodkind . . . The actor inside the giant robot was Bud Wolfe . . . Stock footage in episode 11 of an explosion and avalanche is from THE VANISHING SHADOW (TEMI, page 30) . . . A young Lee J. Cobb was foreman of the construction crew . . . Dorothy Arnold was at one time married to baseball great Joe DiMaggio.

THOSE ENDURING SERIAL FANS

Letters from TEMI fans are most welcome. However, the information supplied in these columns by readers is based on their opinions. The editor does not necessarily purport the info to be complete, exact or accurate.

VOX POP

Keep up the good work. Pioneers may have ulcers and die young, but they go as heroes!

Rog Cedarblade
St. Louis Park, Minn.

* * *

CAPTAIN MARVEL

Your complete rundown on CAPTAIN MARVEL in the latest TEMI couldn't possibly be better.

Believe I can help out with one bit of information. Trade journals in 1940 reported serial negotiations between Republic Studios and the "Superman" copyright owners broke down when the former would not allow the latter any supervision over the shooting script, especially the predicaments "Superman" would be in at the end of each chapter.

Ironically enough, "Captain Marvel," Republic's second choice for a serial super-hero, turned out to be a fabulous success, while the two "Superman" serials later made at Columbia were dismal disappointments.

Edward Connor
New York City, N.Y.

I have some comments to offer in connection with your excellent coverage of ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN MARVEL.

You report on page 298 that Marvel was involved in only three cliff-hangers. He was actually involved in four. The ending of Chapter one is a double cliff-hanger with Marvel in danger of being run down by the horses of Rahman Bar's men and at the same time Betty and Whitey, in the station wagon, falling into the gorge. In Chapter two we see Marvel escape the horses, then rescue Betty and Whitey from the water.

Also, the man thrown from the roof is not the character played by Stanley Price. After Marvel bounces a car motor off the head of Cowan and throws another man from the roof, he captures Owens (Stanley Price) trying to escape down an elevator. Acting on orders from The Scorpion, Owens then leads Billy Batson to a deserted mine where, as Captain Marvel, he is periled by molten lava.

Fawcett Publications ceased producing Captain Marvel comic books in 1953 due to decreasing popularity and lawsuit proceedings by National Periodicals for what they, National, considered copyright infringements. National considered Captain Marvel a direct steal from Superman. The case was settled out of court.

Now in 1973 the original Captain Marvel can again be seen on the newsstands in a comic book called "Shazam" published by National Periodicals.

Douglas Ryder
Guelph, Ontario

(More letters on next page)

TEMI / EDITOR & PUBLISHER • ROBERT M. MALCOMSON
CHIEF – ILLUSTRATIONS DIVISION • JAMES A. STRINGHAM

Bobby Jordan, Robert Armstrong and Johnny Downs
in ADVENTURES OF THE FLYING CADETS (Universal, 1943).

Veteran actor ***Robert Armstrong*** died at the age of 82 on April 20th in a Santa Monica, California, hospital. He was born in Saginaw, Michigan on November 20, 1890 (tho his "official" biography shows the year as 1896). Armstrong appeared in four serials, all produced by Universal Studios: SKY RAIDERS (1941), GANG BUSTERS (1942), ADVENTURES OF THE FLYING CADETS (1943), THE ROYAL MOUNTED RIDES AGAIN (1945).

Western star ***Ken Maynard*** passed away on March 23rd at the Motion Picture Country House and Hospital in Woodland Hills, California. He was 77. Maynard, born July 21, 1895 in Vevey, Indiana, made only one serial, MYSTERY MOUNTAIN. His name was closely linked with three other Western heroes, and he outlived them all — Tom Mix died in an auto crash in 1940, Buck Jones in a nightclub fire in 1942 and Hoot Gibson of cancer in 1966.

Sid Saylor, Ken Maynard and Verna Hillie
in MYSTERY MOUNTAIN (Mascot, 1934).

THE EAGLE

A bit of information on THE VIGILANTES ARE COMING. I recently received a poster from a friend in Finland. There the serial was released as ***Zorro-Veripunainen kotka***. Translated, it's ***Zorro-The Red Eagle***.

Bill McDowell
Charleston, W. Va.

Editor's Note: In photo are Bob Livingston as The Eagle, Raymond Hatton and Guinn "Big Boy" Williams. See TEMI, page 94, for serial coverage.

ENIGMA

Your write-up on RADIO PATROL (pg. 162) does not answer a question that has long bugged me. What were the roles played by Harry Davenport and C. Montague Shaw?

Craig Cameron
New York City, N.Y.

Editor's Note: See photo. Left is Frank Lackteen (Tahata), Davenport (John P. Adams, killed in Chapter 1), and Shaw (Wellington, exposed as Adams' killer in Chapter 12).

TIM McCOY

Since you already highlighted Tim McCoy's serials, THE INDIANS ARE COMING and HEROES OF THE FLAMES (pgs. 3 and 7), I thought perhaps you and your readers would be interested to know what Tim is doing these days. For the past ten years, Tim has been touring the country with Tommy Scott's Country Music Circus. (Before Tim, Johnny Mack Brown and Al "Fuzzy" St. John were the headliners.) The circus plays at country fairs, school functions, auditoriums, and whatever else demands good family entertainment. Still extremely alert and active at 82 years, Tim's act features stories about Buck Jones, Tom Mix, and the other all-time great cowboys. He also tells about the days of the true West and shows various Indian artifacts. He concludes his shows by performing tricks with the bullwhip, a feat that would otherwise be performed by someone much younger. He travels 320 days a year and makes his residence in Nogales, New Mexico. I might add that he is billed as "The Last of the All Time Great Western Stars" and this statement is so true.

L. C. Melchior
Lafayette, La.

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